

Why is India afraid to put this simple question to a free and fair vote? Where is its commitment to democratic principles, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker, I would like to place the Council of Khalistan's open letter in the RECORD at this time.

COUNCIL OF KHALISTAN,  
Washington, DC, January 23, 2006.

MAY GURU BLESS THE KHALSA PANTH IN 2006  
WITH FREEDOM, HAPPINESS, UNITY, AND  
PROSPERITY

DEAR KHALSA JI: Waheguru Ji Ka  
Khalisa, Waherguru Ji Ki Fateh!

Happy New Year to you and your family and the Khalsa Panth. May 2006 be your best year ever. I wish you health, joy, and prosperity in the new year.

The flame of freedom continues to burn brightly in the heart of the Sikh Nation. No force can suppress it. The arrests of Sikh activists, mostly from Dal Khalsa, last January and again in June merely for raising the Khalistani flag and making pro-Khalistan speeches shows that the movement to free our homeland is on the rise. It has gotten the attention of the world.

The Indian government is reacting to the rising tide of freedom for the Sikh Nation. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh apologized to the Sikh Nation for the Delhi massacres of November 1984 that killed over 20,000 Sikhs. It is good that he apologized and it clearly shows India's responsibility, but what good does it do the Sikh Nation? Where are the apologies for the golden Temple attack and the other atrocities? Where is the compensation for the victims' families?

Earlier this month, Sikh farmers were expelled from Uttaranchal Pradesh and their land was seized. They were beaten up by the police. Their homes were bulldozed by paratroopers. Their homes in many cases were built using their life savings and by their own hands. We condemn this act of state terrorism by the government of Uttaranchal Pradesh. As you know, Sikhs are prohibited from buying land in Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh. Now Uttaranchal Pradesh joins that list. Yet there are no restrictions on land ownership in Punjab by non-Sikhs. People from anywhere can buy land in Punjab, including people from Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh. India is trying to subvert Khalistan's independence by overrunning Punjab with non-Sikhs while keeping Sikhs from escaping the brutal repression in Punjab. We must redouble our efforts to free our homeland, Punjab, Khalistan. That is the only way to keep these atrocities from continuing and to protect the Sikh Nation. This is a direct challenge to the Sikh leadership, irrespective of their party affiliation.

Any organization that sincerely supports Khalistan deserves the support of the Sikh Nation. However, the Sikh Nation needs leadership that is honest, sincere, consistent, and dedicated to the cause of Sikh freedom. But we should only support sincere, dedicated, honest leaders. We must be careful if we are to continue to move the cause of freedom for Khalistan forward in 2006 as we did in 2005.

The Akali Dal conspired with the Indian government in 1984 to invade the Golden Temple to murder Sant Bhindranwale and 20,000 other Sikh during June 1984 in Punjab. If Sikhs will not even protect the sanctity of the Golden Temple, how can the Sikh Nation survive as a nation?

The Akali Dal has lost all its credibility. The Badal government was so corrupt openly and no Akali leader would come forward and tell Badal and his wife to stop this unparalleled corruption. Now Badal and his son have accused Chief Minister Amarinder Singh of being tied in with Khalistanis. If this were

true, what would be wrong with it? The Akali leaders also walked out when I predicted at a seminar around the celebration of Guru Nanak's birthday that Khalistan will soon be free, a prediction that was greeted with multiple enthusiastic shouts of "Khalistan Zindabad." How will these Akalis, including Badal and his son, account for themselves? Remember the words of former Jathedar of the Akal Takht Professor Darshan Singh: "If a Sikh is not a Khalistani, he is not a Sikh." Badal and his son are not Sikhs.

The corruption of the Badal government was just part of a pattern of corruption in India. Jobs are sold, legislative seats are rigged, judges preside over cases being tried by their family members, and so many other forms of corruption occur. As Dr. M.S. Rahi has pointed out in his excellent new paper on the corruption, this kind of corruption leads to the kind of atrocities that have unfortunately become so routine in India.

The Council of Khalistan has stood strongly and consistently for liberating our homeland, Khalistan, from Indian occupation. For over 18 years we have led this fight while others were trying to divert the resources and the attention of the Sikh Nation away from the issue of freedom in a sovereign, independent Khalistan. Yet Khalistan is the only way that Sikhs will be able to live in freedom, peace, prosperity, and dignity. It is time to start a Shantmai Morcha to liberate Khalistan from Indian occupation.

Never forget that the Akal Takht Sahib and Darbar Sahib are under the control of the Indian government, the same Indian government that has murdered over a quarter of a million Sikhs in the past twenty years. These institutions will remain under the control of the Indian regime until we free the Sikh homeland, Punjab, Khalistan, from Indian occupation and oppression and sever our relations with the New Delhi government.

The Sikhs in Punjab have suffered enormous repression at the hands of the Indian regime in the last 25 years. Over 50,000 Sikh youth were picked up from their houses, tortured, murdered in police custody, then secretly cremated as "unidentified bodies." Their remains were never even given to their families! More than a quarter of a million Sikhs have been murdered at the hands of the Indian government. Another 52,268 are being held as political prisoners. Some have been in illegal custody since 1984! Even now, the capital of Punjab, Chandigarh, has not been handed over to Punjab, but remains a Union Territory. How can Sikhs have any freedom living under a government that would do these things?

Sikhs will never get any justice from Delhi. Ever since independence, India has mistreated the Sikh Nation, starting with Patel's memo labelling Sikhs "a criminal tribe." What a shame for Home Minister Patel and the Indian government to issue this memorandum when the Sikh Nation gave over 80 percent of the sacrifices to free India.

How can Sikhs continue to live in such a country? There is no place for Sikhs in supposedly secular, supposedly democratic India. Let us work to make certain that 2006 is the Sikh Nation's most blessed year by making sure it is the year that we shake ourselves loose from the yoke of Indian oppression and liberate our homeland, Khalistan, so that all Sikhs may live lives of prosperity, freedom, and dignity.

Sincerely,

DR. GURMIT SINGH AULAKH,  
President, Council of Khalistan.

FREEDOM FOR RENE GÓMEZ  
MANZANO

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 15, 2006

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remind my colleagues about Rene Gómez Manzano, a heroic political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

Mr. Gómez Manzano is a lawyer and a distinguished member of the pro-democracy opposition in Cuba. Along with fellow Cuban patriots Martha Beatriz Roque and Felix Bonne Carcasses, he is a leader of the Assembly to Promote Civil Society. The Assembly is an umbrella organization of over 300 groups of Cubans who have asserted their independence from the totalitarian state. On May 20, 2005, the Assembly carried out a meeting of approximately 200 Cubans who publicly demonstrated their rejection of totalitarianism and their support for democracy and the rule of law in Havana. Mr. Gómez Manzano was one of the primary architects of that historic, admirable accomplishment. Accordingly, he has been the constant target of Castro's machinery of repression. He has been harassed by the tyrant's thugs and, now, unjustly incarcerated as a political prisoner for his peaceful activities.

Almost a decade earlier, in 1997, after co-authoring the important and historic work "La Patria es de Todos"—"The Homeland Belongs to All"—with Martha Beatriz Roque, Felix Bonne Carcasses and another Cuban patriot, Vladimiro Roca, Mr. Gómez Manzano was arrested by the dictatorship and sentenced to various years in the gulag. During his unjust imprisonment, and after being released, Mr. Gómez Manzano never wavered in his commitment to bring freedom, democracy and human rights to the Cuban people. Unfortunately, in an additional act of extreme and despicable repression by the dictatorship, Mr. Gómez Manzano, along with dozens of others, was arrested once again on July 22, 2005, before he could attend a peaceful demonstration in front of the French Embassy in Havana to protest the resumption of the European Union's policy of so-called engagement with the terrorist regime in Havana.

I have never had the honor of personally meeting Mr. Gómez Manzano, but I can certainly say that I know him quite well. I have spoken to him by telephone during various congressional hearings and other public events dedicated to highlighting the suffering and oppression of the Cuban people. He is a great patriot, a man of the law, a man of peace, and an apostle of freedom for Cuba.

Mr. Speaker, it is completely unacceptable that, while the world stands by in silence and acquiescence, Mr. Gómez Manzano languishes in the gulag because of his belief in freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law. We cannot permit the brutal treatment of a man of peace like Mr. Gómez Manzano by a demented and murderous tyrant for simply supporting freedom for his people. My colleagues, we must never forget those who are locked in gulags because of their desire for freedom for their countries. My colleagues, we must demand the immediate and unconditional release of Rene Gómez Manzano and every political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.